

THE VALLEY OF THUNDER

SCENARIO ASL TAC 15 Translated by Coastal Fortress Gaming Group



VICTORY CONDITIONS: The Soviets win at the end of the scenario if they control all but 2 of the buildings located in the valley of board 24 (24V3 included).

GROMOVAJA-BALKA, UKRAINE, February 28, 1942:

The Soviets spent the winter readying for a great counter-offensive in the Donetz basin where they ran hard against the Germans, who were determined to hold on to the ground they had acquired since the spring of 1941. For 10 days the volunteers of the Wallonia Legion had established their defensive positions in the village of Gromovaja-Balka. This unit, the "Burgundians", made up of french-speaking Belgian volunteers where one could find many 16 year old officers among the 14-18 year olds, had its training cut short before being sent to the east. Reduced to 350 men by the rigors of the Russian winter, it was supported by 81mm mortars and two 37mm antitank guns crewed by Croatian volunteers. Moreover, Colonel Tröger, on whom they depended, guaranteed the support of a company of panzers and a flotilla of stukas if needed and added "Just hold 20 minutes, then I will send panzers and stukas". The 1st Company defended the northeast of the village, the 2nd the north and the 3rd the west and southeast. On February 28th, at dawn, "les Russes arrivent!" Two regiments supported by twelve tanks progressed on the frozen stretch which extended to the north. The Burgundians were rushing toward their combat positions when the Russians were no more than 500m away.

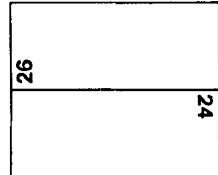
(Illustration: Pak 35/36 on the cold steppe facing east during the winter of 41/42)

BOARD PLACEMENT:

BALANCE:

★ Add a T-34 M41 to the Russian OB

✚ Replace the radio with a field telephone in the German OB



✚ GERMAN sets up first [185]	★	1	2	3	4	② 5	③ 6	⑥ 7	8	9	END
★ RUSSIAN moves first [216]											

Elements of the 1st and 2nd companies of Infantry-Battalion 373 "Legion Wallonia" [ELR:4]
set up on board 24 and 26 in hexes numbered 9 (see SSR 4-7) {SAN:5}:

4-6-8	2-4-8	2-2-8	9-2	8-1	8-0	7-15	5-12	3-2	50-12-19	8	1 north
12	3		3			2	3	2		12	

Point elements of the 100th Jagër-Division
enter on turn 7 along the southern edge of board 24:

15 of Gun Rat: +3+ Other: +1+	37L HS[9]	81* [2-40]	
4	2		36

Elements of LVIIth Army [ELR:2]
enter on turn 1 along the northern edge of board 26 (see SSR 2) {SAN:2}:

4-4-7	4-2-6	9-0	8-1	8-0	7-0	2-10 4-10	1-1 2-2	50-13-20	1-12	17 76L 2/4	17 76L -14
24	12		2			2	4	3	3	4	

Scenario Design: Jean-Luc Béchenne '91

SSR:

- EC are ground snow (E3.72) with no wind at start. Steppe rules apply to board 26 (F13.2). The woods located on the half-hexes numbered 10 of board 24 are extended on to board 26 corresponding half-hexes where they become inherent terrain (A2.3, B.6). Hex 24V3 does not have a level 2. The ground is frozen and it is impossible to dig foxholes but the guns can be emplaced.
- The Russian infantry and AFVs have winter camouflage (E3.712).
- The radio represents an OBA module of 105mm with normal ammunition. The leader who has the radio can set up HIP.
- German 4-6-8 squads and 2-4-8 HS are considered SS. Their morale is underlined (A1.23) and their broken morale for both squads and HS is increased by 1 (9 for squads and 8 for HS).
- The Germans receive air support in the form of 3 Stukas with bombs. Starting on turn 5, the German player makes a dr at the beginning of his RPh. The stukas enter if the dr is the circled number of the current turn in the turn roster.
- The sangars represent snow-made fortifications sprinkled with water to turn the snow to ice. All of the rules for sangars (F8) apply to them. Moreover, these "sangars" behave as night fortifications (E1.16 except, of course, the last sentence). These "sangars" are considered concealment terrain - except for the purpose of gaining concealment during play.

AFTERMATH: The 37mm antitank guns and mortars did not manage to stop the Soviet attack. The AFVs counterattacked and one Walloon gun was put out of combat. The blood of the killed and wounded dyed the snow red along the lines of the defenders. In spite of the heavy losses inflicted on them by the heavy fire of the German machine-guns, the Russian infantrymen were soon in contact and grenades rained down on both sides. One of the groups of "Burgundians" in forward positions was threatened with encirclement. Under the shock, the defenders retreated from combat after suffering enormous losses, then launched a counterattack. The combat became increasingly confused and the tanks, some equipped with flamethrowers, advanced between the *isbas* (log houses), crushing in their path any soldiers who stood in their way. Towards 1100 hrs, with the situation desperate, three-quarters of the villages were occupied by the Soviets and survivors of the Legion launched counter-attack after counter-attack to try and dam the flood of attackers who further increased the pressure with the cry of Hurrah! victory! By the end of the afternoon, when all seemed lost, Stukas of the Luftwaffe emerged from the twilight and swooped down on the Soviet forces with the characteristic howl of their sirens. Thanks to this much hoped for support, the "Burgundians" launched a last counter-attack and managed to push back the attackers. Finally, a group of Panzers, assisted by a battalion of Wehrmacht, arrived to relieve what remained of the Wallonia Legion at the end of the day. 62 Walloons were killed and 110 were wounded.